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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: POL AORC ICJ KV MV CE
SUBJECT: MALDIVES TO SUBMIT A KOSOVO BRIEF TO ICJ

REF: A) STATE 29385 B) STATE 21891 C) COLOMBO 264

MALDIVES

¶1. (SBU) Ambassador communicated ref A points to Maldives Foreign Minister Ahmed Shaheed on March 27. Embassy Colombo notes that the letter from Secretary Clinton thanking Maldives for its recognition of Kosovo (ref B) has helped greatly to sustain Maldives' support for Kosovo independence.

Several members of the leading party in the new government have long-standing ties to the Serbian reform movement OTPOR, which has lobbied the government of Maldives to reverse its recognition of Kosovo (ref C).

¶2. (SBU) Moreover, according to Maldivian media reports, the leader of a small Islamist party in Maldives' parliament, the Majlis, accused Shaheed and others of accepting a bribe from Kosovar official in exchange for the recognition. Shaheed was called upon to appear before a Majlis committee to respond to the charge - which we believe is probably baseless - on March 28.

¶3. (SBU) The pressure on him notwithstanding, on March 30 Shaheed responded to Ambassador: "The Maldives would be most happy to join the other members of the international community in contributing to sustaining peace and stability in the Balkans. I will stay in touch with you as we develop our paper."

SRI LANKA

¶4. (SBU) Embassy believes it would be counterproductive to deliver the demarche to Sri Lanka, however. Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry has made it clear several times in the recent past that it supports Serbia's position in this question. As Sri Lanka attempts to achieve a final military victory over its own separatist movement, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Post does not believe there is any realistic possibility of moderating Sri Lanka's position. However, given the limited capacity of the Sri Lankan MFA (and its current preoccupation with defending against charges of serious human rights abuses and even genocide), it is quite possible that Sri Lanka might omit to submit a brief to the ICJ on Kosovo. A demarche, on the other hand, might well alert the GSL to the issue and elicit an unhelpful submission.
BLAKE